

Review of the Past Week In New York Theaters

By JAMES S. METCALFE.

New York, Dec. 20.—It needs no Shakespearean injunction to this week to "be brief; be brief; be brief." The managers have taken care of that. They have such a holy horror of the week before Christmas and the expenditures of the season that they have every chance and curial every expenditure, and some cases going so far as to cut in two the salaries of their artists as an alternative to being laid off altogether.

Forbes Robertson's Othello.

In New York the fatal week is marked by only one new production and by a dearth of theatrical news. Therefore, Sir Johnston Forbes-Robertson's first American appearance in "Othello" gets a very liberal amount of newspaper space, much of it devoted to a severe slating, modified in tone and with an indulgence due to the great personal respect in which the actor-manager is held as a man and an artist.

"Othello" as an acted play is unfamiliar to the great mass of American theatergoers. Many of those who may be acquainted with it by reading and allusion may be surprised when they stop to ask themselves whether they have ever seen the play. It is a play of the most obvious plays in its repertoire, but since the days of Booth and Salvini there have been few actors who have cared to essay either the Othello or Iago chosen by the star for his own work. Perhaps one reason is that in the acting of Othello before a modern audience, the mechanics of the play creak horribly. In plot it is almost modern melodrama, to any one who resorts to the oldest and most obvious conventions of the stage. To any one who knows anything of violent deaths, to the physician in particular, the famous smothering scene and the death of Othello by his own hand are almost almost to the point of robbing the last act of its tragedy. It is a monument to the genius of Shakespeare that in this day of general knowledge the revival of Desdemona from her smothering to utter a few well-chosen remarks does not bring laughter instead of being accepted with the respectful silence that goes with conviction and credibility. Certainly no modern dramatist would dare fly in the face of despatch.

Bad Presentation.

The settings of "Othello" as given by Forbes-Robertson might have been disappointing. Now they have much the effect of clothing so much wood and often of the kind that it has become an accusation to lavishness of production that, little critical as we are of artistic values and harmonies and of historical accuracy, we resent such shabbiness as is here shown.

The same fault may justly be found with the supporting company in "Othello." The star system, in the old sense when the star was everything and nothing else mattered, has been so long discredited in this country that Forbes-Robertson imperils his own reputation when he brings up his own past in the old conditions. Almost every member seems to regard himself as a useless equipment of the actor. We of course expect the English intention in an English company, but that expectation does not include a complete muffling and indistinctness of very many important speeches. The Booth Theater is not a large one, but it is not exaggerating to say that almost half the lines spoken by the subordinate characters were completely lost by those sitting more than a half-dozen rows from the footlights.

Gertrude Elliott as Desdemona was free from this reproach. She spoke her lines distinctly, almost too mechanically, but the sweetness of the character just nothing in her interpretation even if she gave it no depth or moving quality. And the play of "Othello" with an indifferent Iago is almost to be made as proverbial as "Hamlet" with the Hamlet left out. Mr. Cookson, who had this most important role, played it with almost as much success and with a more intelligent welcome an obscure guest. The climax happened to be good-looking and of many bearing, but he, like practically all of the others, contradicted his speeches and in acting was most mechanical.

The Knight's Own Work.

Forbes-Robertson's Othello will never rank with that of the famous interpreters of this incarnation of the sufferings and unreason of jealousy. He is physically and temperamentally unfitted for the part, so much so that it is a cause of wonderment to his admirers that on artistic grounds he did not elect to play Iago. Of course the Moor outranks the villain in appearance and the bond of the pathos and filial; but Iago is the more intellectual part even if in a lower plane of humanity and Forbes-Robertson is nothing if not an intellectual actor.

Coming Attractions.

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mental agency; also if his friends had been less lusty and the newspapers less sensational.

"The Great Adventure" is supposed to take place in and near London—the artist's home, the rooms of a large hotel, a cottage at Putney and the home of the Prince of Wales. There are four acts. Lyn Harding plays the part of the original shy and talented artist; Janet Beecher, that of the practical and attractive widow.

"Sari."

Henry W. Savage's first new production of the season, an Hungarian operetta, called "Sari" will be the attraction at the National Theater next week.

The new attraction is the English adaptation of "Der Zigeunerprimas," which has been an unrepentant success since it was first produced in Vienna that was performed simultaneously in two theaters. A characteristic Savage cast, which means one of real distinction, will interpret "Sari." Mizzi Hajon has the title role, that of a little Hungarian village beauty, and some of the prominent members of the cast are Harry Davenport, Blanche DeVel, Harrison Barthold, Charles Macklin, T. Wilmoth Macklin, and J. Humbert Duffey. With such a cast, and invested with the prestige of European triumphs, it is predicted that "Sari" will be one of the memorable events of the theatrical season.

Annie Russell.

Following "The Conspiracy" at the Columbia Theater comes Annie Russell for the week of December 22, in her repertoire of old English comedies, including "The School for Scandal" and "The School for Rascals." Her Washington engagement will open with "The School for Scandal," which will be repeated Tuesday night, Friday night, and Saturday night, and "The School for Rascals" will have three performances, Wednesday night, and New Year's matinee and night. The same company that assisted Miss Russell last season remains in her support, including Oswald York, Fred W. Perma, Littlefield Power, Percival Stevens, Murray Kinnel, Leslie Austin, Harold Metzger, Henrietta Goodwin, Pollock Paget, Florence Leclercq and others.

"In the Bishop's Carriage."

Channing Pollock's dramatization of the Bishop's Carriage, will be revived next

his splendid voice and diction were not to be denied. His voicing of Desdemona lacked the magnificent paternal, protective, and caring quality that marked the Othello of Salvini, but was delightful in the dramatization of passion and regard that it evoked. In the stormier moments the English actor let his voice fall into the throaty tones to the point where he became almost inarticulate, and the dramatic effect of passion and regard that it evoked. In the stormier moments the English actor let his voice fall into the throaty tones to the point where he became almost inarticulate, and the dramatic effect of passion and regard that it evoked. In the stormier moments the English actor let his voice fall into the throaty tones to the point where he became almost inarticulate, and the dramatic effect of passion and regard that it evoked.

At the beginning, when Othello in simple speech refuses the charge of sorcery brought against him by Desdemona's father, he was both dignified and picturesque in appearance. His features are not those one easily associates with Moorish blood, but surmounted by the turban and colored brown, they gain acceptance as of the unusual types to be found in every race. In later scenes, with the turban removed and the fine, somewhat gray English hair undisguised by wig or cosmetics, the combination became a disconcerting contrast to the force from the portrayal. In fact, in moments of passion that called for strong facial play there were suggestions of the ridiculous. Followed by calm and the resumption of impressive tone and bearing, Forbes-Robertson was in his own field, and left the final impression of the actor in the hands of his work. It is well studied and most interesting.

Developments in Movies.

The rapidly growing importance of the moving pictures and their close alliance to the theater proper lends interest to some recent occurrences. The first is the conversion of the oldest and most obvious conventions of the stage. To any one who knows anything of violent deaths, to the physician in particular, the famous smothering scene and the death of Othello by his own hand are almost almost to the point of robbing the last act of its tragedy. It is a monument to the genius of Shakespeare that in this day of general knowledge the revival of Desdemona from her smothering to utter a few well-chosen remarks does not bring laughter instead of being accepted with the respectful silence that goes with conviction and credibility. Certainly no modern dramatist would dare fly in the face of despatch.

An unusual theater can eat its head off faster than a lame horse in the stable. In conjunction with Daniel Frohman, Mr. Belasco has out the fairy play, "A Poor Little Devil," into film form, and in a week or two it is to take up its work of earning an income for the Republic. The piece has just been shown for a preliminary matinee at the Belasco, and with a Belasco elaboration of preparation that marks a new departure in the movies and helps to take them to the realm of regular theatrical attractions.

The stage of the Belasco was elaborately decorated with plants and flowers, and the elevators played a little more than usual and among the greenery, low enough down not to obstruct the view, was a numerous orchestra of women, who played appropriate and high-class music through the whole display of the films. At certain episodes they were relieved by a concealed chorus that sang words heard to the action. In the pictures themselves there was evidence of the craft of Belasco in fitting the scenes of "A Poor Little Devil" to their new medium. The result is, perhaps, the best that has yet been attained in adapting American stage work to the requirements of the moving picture, and indicates that when better theatrical brains than have hitherto been used get to work on this form of entertainment its future scope is going to be considerably greater than it has been in the past.

Cosmos of the New York Theaters.

Coming back to the theater proper it is evident that there is no need of going to loud plays or unquestionable moving pictures for lack of wholesome entertainment.

There is no question of either the art or the cleanliness provided in the offering of the visiting Englishmen. Cyril Maude and Forbes-Robertson with their varied repertoires, and "Peg o' My Heart," with its clean sentiment is well with it, although its companion in the way of a long run, "Within the Law," is now in its last fortnight. Two women stars of various attractions, who are presented many vocal and instrumental talent—not a repetition of the bill of last week.

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High-class Vaudeville.

The chief attraction at B. F. Keith's next week will be the Washington premiere of "Woman's Progress," a satire, with Ruth Allen, supported by a company of New York farceurs. In the bill also will be Edwin Stevens, assisted by Tina Marshall, in "The Troubles of B. and C." Another heres is Sophie Tucker, offering dialect folk songs. Other features will be Louis Winsch and Josephine Poore, in "No Trespassing," James Humes, and Al Lee, offering "The New Chaffour," Lew Lockett and Jack Waldron, "The Two Booma-baddies," Daintee La Crandall, Loughlin's comedy dogs, the Pathe motion picture current events, and the "Matinee Dansante," from 1 to 2 every afternoon except Sunday.

"The Spendthrift."

With the original Hudson Theater, New York, production "The Spendthrift," by Porter Emerson Browne, author of "A Fool There Was," will be presented at the Academy next week. The story is of the wreck of a family's happiness, brought about by the divergence of thought and the different paths followed in the pursuit of happiness by a husband and wife. Richard Ward is a man of working, saving and home-loving instincts. His wife longs for luxuries and in his love for her and his efforts to provide her with them he is kept grinding and toiling under a mountain of debt which topples over on him and he is bankrupt.

"College Girls of 1913-14."

The Gayety Theater will offer a Max Spiegel musical extravaganza, entitled the "College Girls of 1913-14," as the attraction for next week, with Abe Reynolds and Morris Frankel featured in the leading male roles. Dolly Morrissey is featured in the leading female role, and is supported by an able cast of singers and dancers who form the chorus of the show.

George Totten Smith wrote the book and Paul Ruesha the music to this entertainment. The list of principals includes Cleo Lewis, Walter Johnson, Katharine Beyer, Harry Morrissey, and Jimmie Hunter.

Feature Films.

The Garden Theater next week will open with the latest feature of the Ambrosio Company, entitled "The Heart of a Hunchback," an adaptation of Sheridan Knowles' drama of other days. On Monday and Tuesday the principal attraction will be "A Bargain with Satan," a surprising production strongly suggestive of the famous opera of "Faust." Across the Continent," "The Great Beyond," a great comedy-drama, will have its first screen showing on Wednesday. On Thursday and Friday comes "The Kissing Cup," a love story in which racing automobiles, aeroplanes and gallant thoroughbreds are prominently featured. "The Queen's Jewels" will be featured on Saturday.

TODAY'S OFFERINGS.

Horton Holmes Travels.

"Japan in Korea" is the subject of the final travelogue to be given tonight and tomorrow afternoon at the Columbia Theater by Horton Holmes, being a recital of Mr. Holmes' experiences and impressions in the hermit kingdom of Korea last August. Mr. Holmes, having visited Japan many times and Korea twice, is happily enabled to compare the old with the new in both of these nations, and his motion pictures and colored views portraying the quaintness of customs and costumes, the picturesque of places and peoples, and the grandeur and distinctness of scenery and architecture make this travelogue one of the most beautiful pictorially of his entire series.

"Les Miserables."

This afternoon and tonight at the National Theater the picture play of Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables" will be the attraction again. The firm hold that this film has taken on the public fancy is clearly shown by the continued patronage.

"Last Days of Pompeii."

With a special matinee today at 2:30 o'clock, the engagement of "The Last Days of Pompeii" will be brought to a close at the Columbia Theater. When the Ambrosio Company were making George Kleine's photo-drama, "The Last Days of Pompeii," at Torino, Italy, they were at a loss to secure sufficient super for the big circus scenes in the amphitheater. However, at that time, there happened to be a strike among the automobile workers in which over 3,000 were out. The enterprising Ambrosio immediately engaged them and made actors out of them. They made up the howling, surging mass in the big arena scenes and lend truth and atmosphere to the pandemonium that accompanies the terrible eruption of Mount Vesuvius.

B. F. Keith's Concerts.

Two concerts will be given today at B. F. Keith's theater, the afternoon event beginning at 3 o'clock, and the evening at 8 o'clock. The principal attraction, drawn from last week's bill, will be Belle Story, Edward Abeles and company, Harry Gilfoil, Prince Lai Mon Kim, Lola Merrill, and Frank Otto, and other appropriate inclusions, together with the Pathe motion pictures and the pipe organ recitals.

Cosmos Concerts.

Featured numbers in the orchestral program at the Sunday concerts from 2 to 3:30 p. m., at the Cosmos today, will be selections from "The Girl of the Golden West" (Puccini); the overture from Flotow's "Martha"; Hildreth's "Nymphs of the Sea World"; Le Tiliere's "Clear the Road" gallop, selections from Herbert's "Serenade"; Strader's "Anniversary March"; Swope's "Cupid's Tangle"; two rag novelties, Allen's "Handy River Rag," and Widmer's "Notoriety Rag"; Ellenberg's "King Midas" overture; Dorn's "Daughters of the Regiment" and others. In addition there will be presented many vocal and instrumental talent—not a repetition of the bill of last week.

Small Talk of the Stage.

Jan MacLaren, leading man with Margaret Anglin, is appearing this year in leading Shakespearean roles for the first time. He has been coming throughout England and the Madcap Duchess are of good quality. At the Hippodrome are bigness, brilliancy and thrills with tank episodes in addition. You need not starve for amusement in New York.

William H. Crane, Douglas Fairbanks, Amelia Bingham, and Patricia Collings.

will appear at the Knickerbocker Theater, New York, tomorrow evening in "The New Henrietta," based on Bronson Howard's comedy, by Winchell Smith and Victor Mapes.

"The Marriage Market," with Donald Brian, played a very large audience in the Grand Opera House, New York, last week.

Percy Mackaye's new drama, "A Thousand Years Ago," has won a remarkable success in Boston, and will be taken into New York within a few weeks.

The first play from the pen of the English impressionist, Rutherford Mayne, "Continued on Page Eleven."

AMUSEMENTS.

COLUMBIA THEATER

BURTON HOLMES
TONIGHT AT 8:30
and TOMORROW MAT. at 3:30
JAPAN KOREA

Y. M. C. A.

Hon. Burton L. French
Member of Congress from Idaho,
will address the meeting at
THE Y. M. C. A.
Sunday, December 21, at 4 P. M.
His subject is
"The Bible Without Miracles"

Miss Josephine Mack, Charlotte Holman, will sing.
YOU ARE INVITED.

FIGHT COST FROHMAN \$10,000 PER SEASON

In the third act of "The Conspiracy," this week's attraction at the Columbia, there is a fight in the dark that costs the management on an average of \$10,000 per season. The scene is where the police overcome the struggling members of "The Scarlet Band," a group of underworld criminals.

Of this expense the largest item is for broken glass. On the left of the room there are two large windows. Each of these windows contain four large lights of plate glass. At the moment in the

play when the police are imagined to break into this room two heavy ladders are rammed through these windows. At the same instant a member of "The Scarlet Band" throws his revolver into the chandelier and down come the numerous glass globes with a crash. The glass for the windows cost \$2 per light and four lights are broken at each performance, thus making this item total \$16, or \$16 per week. On the season this amounts to \$1,280.

Miss Ferguson has achieved a success of unusual proportions in the metropolitan in her new comedy, "The Strange Woman," by William Hurtburt.

AMUSEMENTS.

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PRESENTING ON STAGE AT ALL TIMES ONLY THE BEST
MOST FOREIGN & NATIVE ARTISTS & ENTERTAINERS
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OF ALL PHOTO-DRAMAS.
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700 People.

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JOHN DREW

IN A DOUBLE BILL

HIS LATEST SUCCESS

"THE WILL"

(By J. M. HARRIS, Author of "Peter Pan," "The Little Minister")

"THE TYRANNY OF TEARS"

(By C. HADDON CHAMBERS, Author of "Taste.")

MR. DREW IN BOTH PLAYS

CAST INCLUDES: Laura Hope Crews, Mary Boland, Helen Collier, Elliot Dexter, Robert Driscoll, Sidney Herbert, and Others of Note.

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Matinee Wednesday, New Year's Day, and Saturday—SEATS THURSDAY

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MIRIAM HAJON, HARRY DAVENPORT, BLANCHE DUFFIELD, and Others.

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